

Message Text

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ACTION ITF-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SR-02 ORM-01 VO-03 SCA-01 SCS-03 A-01 OPR-02

AID-20 IGA-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /100 W

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P R 070025Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5652

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION GENEVA

CINCPAC

INFO AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 2833

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, VS, AS

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT RELAXES POLICY ON VIETNAMESE
REFUGEES

REF: CANBERRA 2804

1. MAY 7 AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPERS ALL CARRY STORY DATED MAY 6 AND
SOURCED TO PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM'S PARTY IN JAMAICA THAT THE
AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS TOLD THE UNITED NATIONS IT IS
PREPARED TO TAKE ITS FAIR SHARE OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.
DECISION LEADING TO CHANGE OF POLICY WAS REPORTEDLY MADE BY
PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM IN JAMAICA JUST PRIOR TO HIS WASHINGTON
VISIT. DFA OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD US THE PRESS REPORTS ARE
REASONABLY ACCURATE, BUT DETAILS OF THE NEW POLICY AND THE
EVENTUAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES WHO WOULD BE ALLOWED IN WERE STILL
BEING WORKED OUT.

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2. THE OPPOSITION SPOKESMAN FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MHR ANDREW PEACOCK, COMMENTED MAY 6 THAT THE EASING OF THE RESTRICTIONS WAS A COMPLETE ENDORSEMENT OF WHAT THE OPPOSITION HAD RECOMMENDED WEEKS AGO.

3. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT OPPOSITION PRESSURE, COUPLED WITH YESTERDAY'S MOVES BY CANADA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM TO ACCEPT REFUGEES, HAVE FORCED WHITLAM TO ADOPT A MORE FORTH-COMING ATTITUDE. THERE ARE REPORTS THAT MEMBERS OF HIS OWN CABINET HAVE BEEN URGING HIM TO MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION AS WELL AS IN ORDER TO COUNTER THE OPPOSITION'S CHARGE THAT THE WHITLAM GOVERNMENT HAD NOT BEEN EVENHANDED IN ITS DEALINGS WITH HANOI AND SAIGON.
GREEN

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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